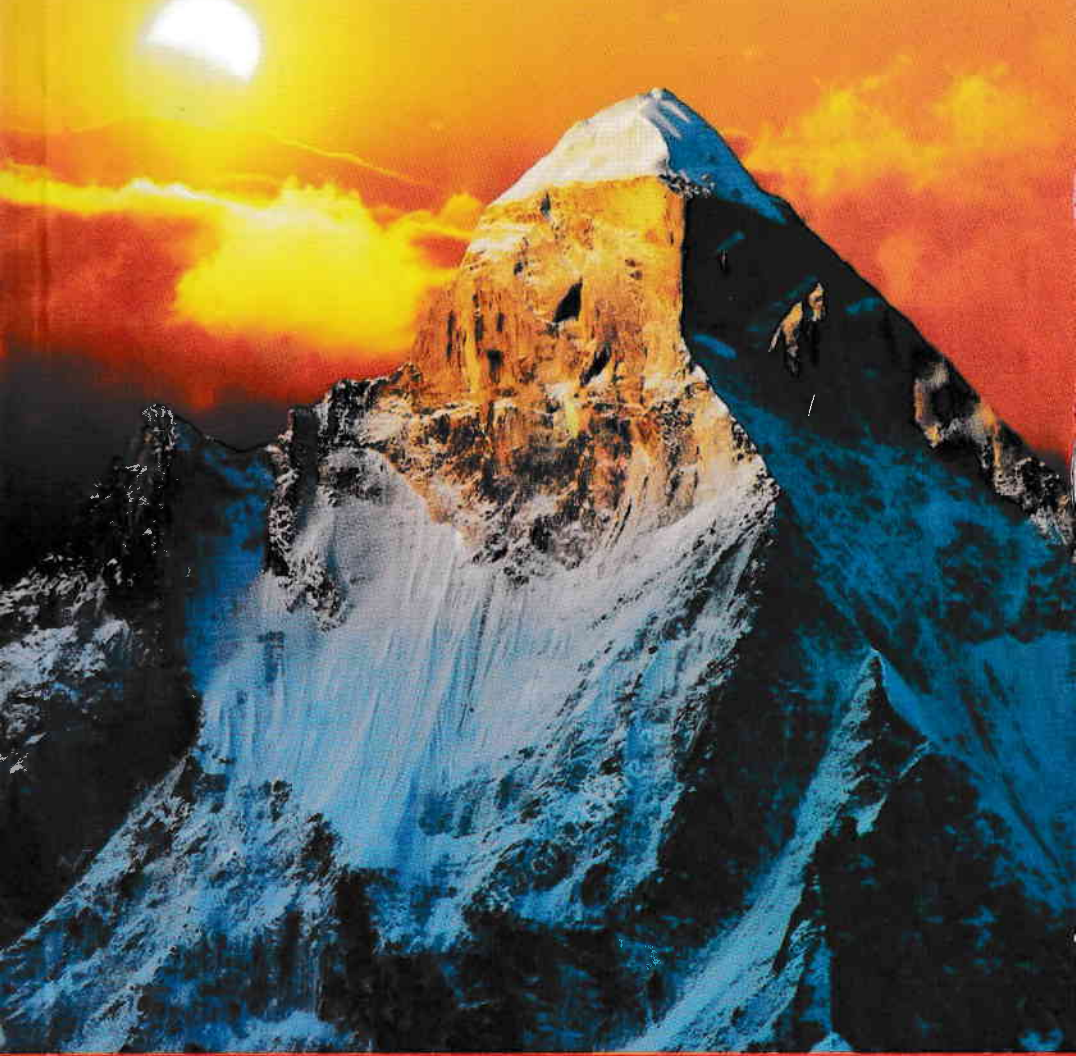
The Himalayan Bard

A Collection of Poems from Nepal



Nepali Literature Promotion Sub-committee

NRNA

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Pradip Kumar Rai (Byakul Maila)

Hundred of flowers woven in a string,
we the Nepalese are a garland,
spread with sovereignty from
Mechi to Mahakali;
a playground of nature's wealth unbound
is this nation,
freed and emboldened by many valiant martyrs;
a land of knowledge and peace extending across plains,
hills and mountains;
indivisible is this beloved land,
our dear motherland!
With many races, tongues and faiths,
cultures are of incredible sprawl;
this progressive nation of ours,
all hail Nepal!

The Himalayan Bard

A collection of poems from Nepal

Advisor
Tenzi Sherpa

Chief Editor
Biswasdip Tigela

Editor
Mahesh Paudyal

Published from Kathmandu by:
PROMOTION OF NEPAL ABROAD TASK FORCE TEAM
International Co-ordination Council
Non-Resident Nepali Association
(NRNA)

The Himalayan Bard

(A Collection of Poems from Nepal)

Advisor: Tenzi Sherpa
Chief Editor: Biswasdip Tigela
Editor: Mahesh Paudyal
Layout : Saman Shrestha

Copyright : Publisher

Edition: First, 2013
Web Edition @ www.nepaliliterature.com
Nepali Literature Promotion Sub-committee

- Chair : Dr. Govinda Singh Rawat (Canada)
- Member : Biswasdip Tigela (Brunei)
- Member : Binod Khakurel (France)
- Member : Mitralal Pardey (Poland)
- Member : Nawaraj Pokharel (Romania)
- Member: Raju Paudel (Saudi Arabia)

ISBN: 978-9937-2-6974-2
Feedback contact: direct.letter@gmail.com

Price: US $ 10

Published by:

Promotion of Nepal Abroad Task Force Team
International Co-ordination Council, Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA)
NRNA Secretariat, FNCCI Building Pachali Shahid Shukra FNCCI Milan Marga Teku, P.O Box 269, Kathmandu Nepal
Tel: (+977-1) 4215247 / 4262255, Fax: (+977-1) 4262255,
Email: nrn@nrn.org.np, Website: www.nrn.org.np

FOR NEPALI BY NEPALI नेपालीका लागि नेपाली

Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA)

गैरआवासीय नेपाली संघ

Ref N-93/13

A Salutary Initiative

The Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) was incepted feeling the need basically to integrate Nepalese brethren scattered all over the world and to inspire them to contribute to the overall development of Nepal from every angle. Besides economic development, intellectual and cultural development of the country too are among the topmost priorities of the Association. Promotion of Nepal's literature, art and culture, therefore, has always been an extremely important sphere in which NRNA has bestowed a lot of concentration.

I was extremely delighted when Biswasdip Tigela informed me about the publication of *The Himalayan Bard*, and without any delay, I approved of the idea. In fact, it is a noble task, aimed at translating and launching Nepali poetry for the global audience. I see this initiative as indicative of two things. First, it springs from the conviction that Nepali poetry is world-class and through translation, it can draw the globe's attention towards itself. Second, it can be a messenger of Nepal for the global community.

I am hopeful that the publication will, within the scope of its range and limitation, contribute to the enrichment of Nepali literature in the global literary arena. Since the collection is quite inclusive, both in terms of representation of poets from across different communities, and also in themes of the poems included, I hope it will competently represent Nepal with all of its beautiful diversities.

I wish the publication all success.

Jiba Lamichhane
President,
International Co-ordination Council,
Non-Resident Nepali Association
Date: 6th September, 2013.

NRNA Secretariat, FNCCI Building Pachali Shahid Shukra FNCCI Milan Marga Teku, P.O Box 269, Kathmandu Nepal
Tel: (+977-1) 4215247 / 4262255, Fax: (+977-1) 4262255, Email: nrn@nrn.org.np, Website: www.nrnorg.np

Ref N-93/13

A Handy Present for Global Friends of Nepal

When we commune with foreigners, especially those who favour Nepal, literature is one of the topics that comes across us. And I wish I could explain Nepali poetry in such discussions. When I listen to long explanations about poetry of South Korea, the country I live in, I have always had this cognition that our literature is no less than that of any other country. What has crossed my mind several times is why not translate some good poems from Nepali into English and present them so that I could promote Nepal and Nepali literature at the same time.

It was when I had a very short conversation with Biswasdip Tigela on this thought that we came up with the concept of preparing a handy booklet of Nepali poems in English so that Non-Resident Nepalese (NRNs) can present something to their friends globally and endorse Nepali literature abroad at the selfsame time.

Promotion of Nepal Abroad Task Force Team, formed under International Co-ordination Council of Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) has a literary sub-committee which aims to promote Nepali literature abroad through the organization's global network. *The Himalayan Bard* is in publication now with the same objective. I hope this book will be a good promotion of Nepali literature, and foster a global virtual fraternity that binds Nepal to her friends around the globe.

I urge members of the NRN community to share the book with their friends globally as your present, so that friends of Nepal will have the opportunity to observe and appreciate the exceedingly prodigious field of Nepali poetry.

I would like to thank Mr. Biswasdip Tigela for putting his valuable efforts to complete the book with beautiful poems written by Nepali poets. I also thank all the poets who have contributed to this booklet and allowed us this rare opportunity to proudly showcase world class poetry, coming from our own country. Thanks too are due to Mr. Mahesh Paudyal, who took the pain to edit this book and launch in the present format.

Tenzi Sherpa
(Presently, South Korea)
General Secretary, NRNA
Chair, Task Force Team,
Promotion of Nepal Abroad
International Coordination Council, NRNA

Editorial

The sub-committee for literature, framed by Promotion of Nepal Abroad Task Force Team, under International Co-ordination Council of Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA), has been actively discharging its duty as a coordinating forum for Nepalese compatriots scattered all over the world. The Association has its branches in more than 65 countries.

From every single Nepali citizen in a foreign land is an ambassador of Nepal. Their discipline, progress and diligence showcases Nepal's honor, and contributes to Nepal's progress. A country like Nepal, bedecked by so much of diversity, is a rare sight in the globe. Including Mount Everest, the roof of the world, Nepal has ten of the highest mountain peaks on earth within its territory. The federal republic of Nepal is characterized by many accolades of global importance: Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha is here; Nepal is home to the Gorkha soldiers known globally for their bravery; its topography is simultaneously characterized by mountains, hills and plains with different climates of extreme coldness, mildness and heat; it is home to 125 communities speaking 95 different languages; it is a land where people believing in different faiths—Hinduism, Buddhism, Kirat, Islam, Christianity and other—live in great harmony.

The Nepalese always accord a warm hospitality to tourists from all over the world. This is one of many reasons why Nepal is considered one of the finest tourist destinations in the world. There is a saying that the life of a tourist, who does not step into the blessed land of Nepal at least once in his lifetime, remains incomplete. Hence, Nepal is always thronged by a large number of tourists.

Tourism is one of the most striking identities of Nepal in front of the world. We believe literature plays a great role in promoting tourism. So, we have collected some verses dealing with certain specific facets of Nepal's life to present to you all. Currently, literatures of many languages that showcase some

identity of Nepal, have been enriching Nepal's overall literary terrain. Many organisations like World Nepali Literature Federation are working to promote Nepali literature globally. Nevertheless, additional serious and consolidated efforts are required to globally promote Nepali Literature.

In order to announce the riches of Nepali poetry, some of the finest poems of our times have been collected and rendered into English, and published in the form of this book. We have ensured that creations from diverse communities, in a myriad of themes, appear. We have included both men and women, and people of different communities from all the major geographical terrains of Nepal. We hope, the collection will draw the interest of everyone, and prove handy to many.

I am thankful to Tenzi Sherpa, Chair of the 'Promotion of Nepal Abroad' task force, for his consent and suggestion in bringing out this book. I am also thankful to Dr. Govinda Singh Rawat for his valuable contributions to this work. I owe my gratefulness to Mr. Mahesh Paudyal, faculty at the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, who translated most of the poems from Nepali and edited this book.

Biswasdip Tigela
Chief Editor
Member, Nepali Literature Promotion Sub-committee
President, Global Federation for Nepali Literature,
World Central Committee
biswasdip@ymail.com

Preface

Ever since the sub-committee for literature framed by Promotion of Nepal Abroad Task Force Team, under International Co-ordination Council of Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) was bestowed with the responsibility to publish a collection of poems by Nepali poets—both at home and abroad—the editorial team decided to collect poems, based on two major criteria: first, the poets will be chosen to ensure representation of various communities in Nepal, and second, the verses will foreground some unique aspect of Nepal's national or personal life. The result is ***The Himalayan Bard***, and the collection accommodates poems by heterogeneous groups of poets of various times, tastes and milieus, ranging from Devkota of the earlier generation to Rabat of the contemporary time. Care has been taken to ensure that these verses, with their footings on national or personal chronicles, are fresh with typically Nepali imageries and metaphors, or make a new point for the readers. A couple of poems too have been included with themes other than exclusively Nepalese content, because, they are capable of showcasing a rare quality poets from Nepal are worthy of.

We are convinced that like poetry from any other cultural space articulating its power in the global space, Nepali poetry can claim for itself a global, intellectual validation and certification for a number of reasons. First, experiences of a nation in the Third World, never colonized by any power in history can open up avenues for new research and study. Second, Nepal is the seat of Himalayan Civilization that saw the rise and progress of two of the greatest religions of the world, and yet, remained accommodative and harmonious with people of any other religion.

Nepal has its own epistemological tradition that has a proven history of thousands of years, but somehow, it lacks the infrastructure to make the tradition global. Poets of the later generation are aware of this fact, and hence, they have taken up the charge, not only to write verses, but also to introduce to the world a rich, indigenously Nepali body of knowledge, by excavating

its unique mythology, micro-history, folk and rural life, cultural diversity and collective, social memory.

As is true for any non-Western cultural space, Nepal's poetry has, of late, renewed its fascination for the remote past, that shaped an embryo for the evolution of the Himalayan Civilization. A new awareness of past glory and present merits—sometimes even claimed as heralding a 'romantic renaissance'—characterises contemporary Nepali poetry, evidenced by a burgeoning number of young poets going for cultural poetry, strewn with mythological and historical allusions and metaphors. Their poetry showcases a great civilization which, due to certain mishaps, was either overshadowed, maybe by the Indic discourse that overwhelmingly influenced the Third World or Postcolonial Literature, or was somehow taken for granted because of the tremendous influence of the West. But with time, Nepali muse has gathered the awareness that unless its own identity element is foregrounded, Nepali literature will continue to be eclipsed by the literature of its neighbourhood that has been homes to Nobel Laureates.

Nepal's unique epistemic tradition embodies a number of cultural realities. Directly developing from the erstwhile pantheist and animistic tradition, Hinduism and Buddhism—two great schools of practical and spiritual education in the world—developed in tandem with the Kirat Civilization, which has harboured, till this day, some of the most poignant myths and histories of Nepal. These three epistemic schools, along with innumerable other cultural pantheons, constitute Nepal, whose even a fragment of knowledge has not been adequately explored.

Therefore, when the idea of this book incepted even in its most crude form, the editorial team was convinced about one thing: it shall announce the coming of voices from Nepal, that shall sing the songs of Nepal in the global language, and present to the world a symphony bedecked with Nepal's unique and indigenous knowledge and belief. A few of the poems in this collection are set in other themes and locales, but they are rich in themselves, because they have new ideas of convey.

Unless otherwise mentioned, the translations are mine. I hope, the verses will introduce the readers with Nepal, the land of the Himalayas.

— Mahesh Paudyal
Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University
mahesh.kathmandu@gmail.com

Contents

Make Me a Sheep, O God!	Laxmi Prasad Devkota	11
The Mountain	Bairagi Kainla	12
Elements of Love	Bikram Subba	15
Making Ourselves Ready	Pawan Alok	18
The Nation's Daily Routine	Shyam Rimal	20
Winter Without You	Govinda Giri Prerana	21
Krishnaman and His Sons	Govinda Singh Rawat	23
Promise to the Motherland	Tsewang Sherpalama	27
Sagarmatha	Krishna Prasai	28
On a Journey	Shree Om Shrestha	30
After Seeing a Day Off	Aruna Vaidhya	31
Commonality	Bhisma Upreti	33
Bisé Nagarchi's Account	Shrawan Mukarung	34
A Mountain	Nabaraj Lamsal	35
The Budhhas should Dance...	Sudeep Pakhrin	36
Moods and Verses	Krishnaraj Sarbahari	38
Shade of Saipal...	Hemant Biwas	40
The City Is Mine Too	Tirtha Sangam Rai	43
The Declaration of ...	Samadarshi Kainla	46
Soil and Its Talisman	Dipendra Singh Thapa	50
I, a Signpost	Biswasdip Tigela	52
City and the Dreams	Keshab Sigdel	54
Atlas	Prakash Subedi	56
An Avenging Apparition	Jhamak Ghimire	57

• A Jungle of Smoke	Narayan Shrestha	59
• At the Most	Saraswati Pratiksya	61
• Light on the Mountain	Mahesh Paudyal	62
• While the East Begins to Redden	Meera Mann Thapa	65
• Those Away from Home	Tara Parajuli	68
• A Sheer Life in the Himalayas	Pancha Vismrit	71
• A Capital Away from Yours	Rabat	75
• The Morning Mourning Crowd	Deependra Adhikary	78
• Alone Alone, Once Again	Heman Yatree	80
• The Takeover	Puspa Moonankarmi	83
• The Human Kingdom	Phulman Bal	85
• The Sea Port	Basanta Basnet	87
• You are Bartering Death	Asafal Gautam	89
• Ancestors	Anil Prithak	91
• My Country My Pride	Mitra Lal Parday	93

MAKE ME A SHEEP, O GOD!

Laxmi Prasad Devkota

Let me not jump to the void, like a sage
or with an artificial imagination
let me not create distorted magic of variegated colours out of mundane truth.
Let me not become a Brahmin to live on dirty water, washing away others' sin.

***

Let me not reform to expose the world.
Let me not patch up old and tattered things.
Let me lit the light of life,
like the simple, beautiful, and unbeautiful light of nature.
When I die
let me reach up, even higher than a sage.

(Translation: Bhuwan Thapaliya)

THE MOUNTAIN

Bairagi Kainla

Inside the house, ascending to the top floor
I often feel, I climb the stair, as high as peaks.
These days, even in dreams
I find myself scaling mountains.
I make those hills and mountain,
that refuse to bow
bow upon my feet's every threshold
upon my road!
Oops! The Himalayas crumble
with their backs broken…
retch surges of the night, upon my road.
The thunderbolt of the reflected sound
bumps against the sky-walls
and falls on the roof of moving trains
upon the main road!
The rail-coaches are cramped in spills of blood
clotted between broken glass fragments.
The moments of life…
upon broken railway tracks
From within the flickering fire-flames

I collect, I lift…
inside the pockets, and upon shoulders!
Having escorted many children to schools,
many sons to their fronts at their limits,
and many fathers to their homes from workplaces,
I have lifted upon my shoulders,
these tired trails
and roads shattered by accidents.
I carry the corpse of life on my Kumbhakarna's shoulders.
The corpse of life
ripe with warmth
of my love's density and faith;
falls, split into fragments of rays,
and falls blazed in light, each carrying a blessing.
Inside each of my steps: upon my road!
an eye falls, and a night wanes out.
And, another eye falls, and yet another night wanes.
The feet fall and devour a yard-long path
the gloves fall, and a bridge evolves 'twixt the earth and the sky
the embrace of a pair of arms falls
in an incomputable measure
and a new stile opens in history!
On the top of the stile
between the spiny leaves of pine
with letters of boughs' nodal eyes,
time comes hasting and writes
a notice in some lines
for people's information:

Welcome, mountaineers!
Welcome, tender heel,
and welcome, every life!
Let everyone start
trips from here, once again
from this stile!
With the sun loaded on.
I often dream these days,
that, on a pair of upright palms,
I lift the sea
from under the feet of the erect stile
blenched by the light from the third-eye,
rescuing materials and ships
from the piscean attack of sharks and whales,
or from the pillage of the Tartan pirates
even by lifting it on fingertips,
as if it were Govardhan hill
and from the same stile these days
I dream myself scaling mountains.
These day always in dreams,
I find myself scaling mountains.

ELEMENTS OF LOVE

Bikram Subba

I know, I am dying soon.
After I am gone–
all atoms of the *prithvi* in my body
should get strewn on the land, and make soil fertile.
On Valentine's Day
I should plant rosy smiles
on every bough.

After I die,
Let all vapour of the *jal* within me
mix with the romantic cascades
and swell in beats of dance;
I shall welcome you, at the confluence of Trishuli and Ganga,
with the arms of my love open.
I beseech you : come
and soak yourself all through, in my love.
And touching the edges of each of your parts
I shall play the *jal-taranga*
of an intimate love

After I die, I need to infuse
into your multicoloured countenance
the *vayu* that was within me, as oxygen
and silently move along, in every step of yours
as *pran* — the soul!

When my physical body perishes
I need to add the *agni* in me
to the sun, and rise in its glorious rays
as the shepherd of each living blood cell.
I need to light a new lamp of love
in each of your parts, each single day.

I need to hang the *akash* in me
over your bedroom, after I die
and croon all through the night
a song of love, over its whole expanse
and every evening, caught in its symphony
our hearts shall chant melodies of joy.

Though my forms change after I die
let my elements be spent in giving you joy
and no matter, how many times I die
let me add up roots to grow afresh.

prithvi: *the element in human body that makes ups the fur, nails, teeth, skin, muscles, neurons, organs and things inside the intestines. These elements return to the earth after we die.*

jal: *the water-element in human body that ultimately returns to water. Bile, serum, blood, sputum, puss, fat, tears, sweat, urine and such other fluids belong to 'jal'.*

vayu: *the air-element in human body, that ultimately returns to air. Breaths, air inside the intestine, air we puke out etc. belong to 'vayu'.*

agni: *the heat of our body, that ultimately returns to the heat in the atmosphere makes up the 'agni' element. Body heat, energy used in digestion, heat generated in metabolism and growth etc. make up this element.*

akash: *the vacant spaces inside our body make up the 'akash' or the sky element. Pores in the ears, nose, mouth, anus etc. comprise this element. After death, it gets subsumed into the open sky.*

jal-taranga : *a water percussion that produces a beautiful melody*

MAKING OURSELVES READY

Pawan Alok

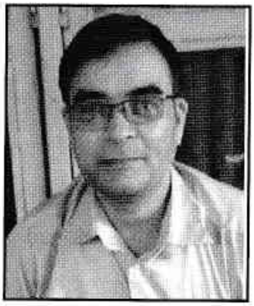
Like those highlands
being tampered with
for transmuting into residential village,
like Sankhuwa stream through Khempalung gorge
trying to become the Arun River
we're making ourselves ready for future;
we're making ourselves ready to welcome tomorrow
that is coming with a bright light

This is the country of several gallant voices,
this is the country of many warriors' immolation.
Hail the highland trying to be transmuted into a village
not just a village, a city perhaps,
hail Sankhuwa, trying to be theArun River
not just the Arun, the Saptakoshi perhaps.
This is the motherland
that gave birth of to a son like Buddha;

this is the blessed land
that gave birth to daughters like Bhrikuti and Sita.
We must be able to cultivate it;
we must be able to adorn it.

That's why
in this land of glorious annals
for that responsibility
for that dream
for the new future
we're making ourselves ready
to welcome tomorrow
that's coming with bright wings
for a grand flight towards the golden future;
we're making ourselves ready.

THE NATION'S DAILY OUTINE



Shyam Rimal

I covered my head with a *dhaka topi*
and put on a pair of *daura-surwal*

I took up
my national flag
and sang the national anthem

I bowed to the Himalayas,
showed reverence to the hills
and expressed my obeisance to Madhes

I took the nation's map
in my hands
and started mugging up
the blood-smeared frontiers

I pass every single day
with the same itinerary
and revert into deep, contented sleep at night.

dhaka topi : a typical Nepali cap
daura-surwal: national dress of Nepal for males

WINTER WITHOUT YOU

Govinda Giri Prerana
(Presently, USA)

This winter without you—
I used your memories
as quilts and mattresses
and used your memories
as pillows

Inflation was rampant in the country;
the chill of winter
was raising a mountain of ice in me
and it was aiming
to be taller than Everest

Like a land barely passable,
like a mountain almost invincible,
like a swollen river impossible to swim,
cold was the chill of this winter
with all its brutalities

Surrounding mountains
of Kathmandu Valley
were crowned with snow;

young men and women
to treasure the moments of life
were playing in snow on the mountaintops;
and the television was reporting
things poor Puru and Jiva did not know.
A tall, snow heap was inside me
and I had no need of visiting the mountaintop to play.

Perhaps the winter knew you were absent—
the chill was the most felt one in history.
It came upon quietly
as death of honesty
comes to the country's politicians

Inside the quilts
I was freezing
though the television screens now
were displaying lava spewing out of volcanoes
as if bent on teasing me.

This winter
when you were absent
there was no need
for mighty earthquake
and boiling lava

This winter
that passed without you,
I realized
how chill gnaws.

KRISHNAMAN AND HIS SONS

Govinda Singh Rawat
(Presently, Canada)

Though born to a middle-class family
Krishnaman had afforded his sons
high education.
Selling his legacy in the country,
he had managed them a stay in hostels
and emptying his provident fund,
paid for good colleges.
The husband and wife passed many a season
with just a pair of clothes
so that their sons would grow in joy.
Like his eldest son
Krishnaman provided his younger kid
with everything, like a faithful father
and the sons enjoyed the foreign air.
After graduating, however,
they got lost in the alien land
and with jobs, settled there.
Parents, back at home
became distant dreams now
and the sons went farther even
as dollars bartered all their love.
With it they forgot

relations, nation and acquaintances.
It pegged Krishnaman deep in the heart
to see his sons going away
deciding never to return.
So the couple was now left
to live in nothing but hope.
Time flew on its own accord
and with it, the wife caught an ailment;
the love for her sons gnawed her soul
and her weary eyes started seeking them.
Wife's ailment,
and pain of loneliness,
made Krishnaman shudder with emptiness.
So he sent words to his sons,
made all request to return
but, they chose to buy love
by sending cash for medicine.
The mother's craving
to see her sons
remained unfulfilled
forever.
Her eyes were still open, waiting for them
when the soul flew off the body.

The younger one came to perform the rituals
and gave away *dakshina* as much as he could.
Krishnaman was happy, before the society
forgetting all his complaints,
but the boy wanted to return soon
and the news pinned Krishnaman deep within.

The boy left,
promising he would come back soon
and keep calling home in between.
He bequeathed his mobile set
to his father as a token.

Krishnaman, now all alone,
though he had fathered two sons
was left forlorn
as his wife was gone.

As he was fiddling with the phone, one day
the voice of the elder one flowed in,
and the caller talked mistaking the recipient
for his own brother.
Whatever poor Krishnaman heard
made him wish for his own death
for, he knew
that not just the world
but his own child was drowned
in a murk of selfishness.

Time and again
he remembered what his eldest son said
to his younger brother
on the phone
and the words irked him quite often:
"Brother, you must be quite impatient
to return;
leave your cell to Father

and manage the cost of the rituals;
I will bear half of it.
Leave back a few hundred dollars too,
as a mark of your duty
of being a son;
when Father dies,
I shall go home.
This was what we decided
between us, wasn't it?
If both of us go, the expense will go high.
Those who die, they go away;
all we need to do is
perform the rituals."

Krishnaman fumed at the cell
and at himself too;
what to talk of his sons!
He was extremely angry with both.

Krishnaman loved the boys,
but the boys loved distant lands.
He flung the phone, his son's gift
away from his home
and broke down into torrents of tears
in memory of his beloved wife.
He wailed even louder
remembering his sons' contract.
He snivelled with deep pain
thinking of their decision
to return home only on his death.

PROMISE TO THE MOTHERLAND

Tsewang Sherpalama
(Presently New York)

I may be far, far away from my motherland
but Nepal would never be out of my life.
I may be far, far out of my native land
but Nepal would never be out of my heart.
I may be who I may be! Wherever I may be!
But Nepal in me is never, never forgotten.

I may have left my home and people
but the memories would always be with me.
I may have started a new life at a new place
but I have always treasured old memories in me.
I may be who I may be! Wherever I may be!
But I will never, never let Nepal out of my mind.

My motherland and my people do not cry !
Cry no more, I hear the cries in your voice !
Cry no more, I see the pain in your eyes.
I may be far, far away and far, far out
I promise I'll come back with a vision.
I understand what you are going through,
I promise I'll come back with a mission.
I promise, I promise; because I am you.

SAGARMATHA

Krishna Prasai

I have all rights to be proud—
I am Sagarmatha, world's highest peak.
I have looked at many a face
from this high position.
Many people came
stepped upon me, and pompously said,
"I am even taller than Sagarmatha."
But why couldn't their height last long?
How can man rejoice, stepping upon others?
What a thing man is!
He never fails
to step upon others,
to buy others
and
if chances favour, to litter the left-over
and even more,
to defame others!

For having stepped upon my chest,
he received awards.
Putting my name on bait,

he asks for aids.
And sells me, without a shame
for keeping himself alive.
How would the feet that step upon me,
know the hardship I endure through
and the injustice I bear?
Who listens to the heart-rending cries
I let out, against the human race?
I am Sagarmatha, after all.
The feet would never know
the pain of being Sagarmatha!

Sagarmatha: Nepali name for Mount Everest – world's highest mountain peak

ON A JOURNEY

Shreeom Shrestha
'Rodan'

Many have perchance walked
along this trail on trips;
the shoeprints on the dust
enforce this conviction!

Along a mountain trail
just the width of a wrist,
the footprints had been deformed
I too was leaving mine,
only to be crushed!

The friend on the lead said
Do not look anywhere else;
walk following my steps
if you turn up or down,
the river, hills and the rocks
shall all appear horrific
and deter an already worked up trip.
But,
to which village can I head for
and the annals of which home can I comprehend
following someone else's footprint?

AFTER SEEING A DAY OFF

Aruna Vaidhya

Gathering the residual light of the entire world
a day was receding
beyond the steep hills in Kakani
and we returned,
seeing the receding day off.

Day,
a voluntary, but highly loyal employee of nature
attempting to resist its ageing youth
gathering contentment even at retirement,
fell in the west, and got eclipsed.
The scarlet youth, red and bright
compared with the entire day,
looked the prettiest that moment
in its frail beauty.
It was cool and composed; probably tired.
No heat shot out of it,
neither did it scorch.
Yet, it had with it,
a divine, silver jar of the Annapurna
which, it would not lend,
for any persuasion on earth
be it to the limit of death, even.

Right in front of the eyes,
it subsumed into a forest of hills.
Probably, its mother had admonished:
"Keep early hours, honey;
home is quite far!"
Or, its wife, standing on the threshold
Had said, "Do not delay;
Curfew might strand you!"

He rushed therefore,
all of a sudden, hasting!
He had no time to ask for leave as well,
he didn't say, 'see you tomorrow,' either
and we – mute, speechless, and spelled
could neither hold the day
that gathered every bit of light, and fled
nor could we run after it.

Somewhere, in a faint voice,
we heard him say something aright
"Foolish mortals!
why do you see me off?
Why do you watch me recede?
In turn, I bade you farewell
and you are prettier than me,
far, far prettier.
Take good care of yourselves, rather."

Kakani: *a beautiful picnic spot, around half an hour drive from Kathmandu to the east*

COMMONALITY

Bhisma Upreti

A caravan of mules
just went past this way
stirring dust, as lovely as longings
and now,
a band of weary porters
is scaling the trail in the same way!

Both have pain
piled on their shoulders;
both have had no time for a bath;
both are hungry and tired too.
Cold has been tickling both;
no dream decors their eyes.
A foul odour fills the nostrils of both.

What a commonality!
The two share the same exhaustion.

Perhaps, you have been to the Himalayas too.
Have you ever noticed any difference
between the mules, and the porters?

BISÉ NAGARCHI'S ACCOUNT

Shrawan Mukarung

Master!
Why have the lofty peaks of the Gorkha Kingdom
suddenly shrivelled?
Why are these decent and dignified people
bleeding and bent?
Why has the Daraundi turned around to flow uphill?
Why do I see the palace in fragments?
I've gone mad; I've gone mad.

Master!

Does your sword now chop heads, or petals?
I reckon not.
Does your rifle shoot down dreams, or people?
I cannot tell.
Did your subjects make this kingdom, or you?
I am confused.
Master, I've been with you for two hundred and fifty years now;
how can I be a terrorist?
I've gone mad, Master. Mad.

(Excerpt, translated by Kunda Dixit)

Bise Nagarchi: a tailor from Gorkha, who sewed clothes for King Prithvi Narayan Shah

A MOUNTAIN

Nabaraj Lamsal

A mountain is never spent
though incessantly it sends
milk downsteams;
only that, those who drink it are never satiated.

A mountain is just a mountian—
and therefore, everything.
Those who drink it add up to nothing.
The peak knows:
it has no king
no suject,
no master
no ruler or ruled.
The truth is that—
there's only a mountain on it
and no other mirage, anywhere.
That is why, anywhere in the world
a mountain is always so high!

THE BUDDHAS SHOULD DANCE THIS MOMENT

Sudeep Pakhrin

Shaking out of their deep contemplations
the Buddhas should
rise from their Samadhi, this moment
and dance in frenzy
without a care.
Wars, in their cravings for peace
should writhe, all night.
Kissing roses in the garden
ravenous vultures should
take free flight in the air.
This moment
with a claim of divinity
in my love,
I am projecting words
into the dark space of history,
"Meera, I love you."

I shall rip you up out of history;
free you from Krishna's seductive spell
and keep loving you till eternity

I swear!
The Buddhas should engage in love too
this moment;
a storm should blow the mind of temples
and the mosques should raise their ears;
eyes of the churches should shrink in astonishment.
But, I entreat again,
the Buddhas should be dancing this moment
and should engage in love.
Wars, in their cravings for peace
should writhe, all night.
Ravenous vultures should, at length
kiss roses in the garden
in the same way
as I love Meera—the epochal woman!
I adore Meera— the apostle of love!

MOODS AND VERSES

Krishnaraj Sarvahari

No verse is ever woven
when hungry,
when tired.
Tell me, dear poet,
in which mood
do you scribble verses?

You keep honking
the same festered doctrines,
the same stale news;
nothing ever is rooted in this nation,
you just puke a foreign tale.
Dear poet, I know not
in which moods you scribble verses.

How long have you got to walk?
Even these days, in desolate lands
a landlord, in demand for his share
worth half the harvest from his land
pulls the *agharan* of your sister-in-law;
makes your brother pull the cart
and your sister wash the *phariyas* of his wife;
and you, wagging a tail

in front of, and at the back of the same landlord
are writing verses.
Dear poet, I know not
in what mood you create poems.

A tell-tale says
you harvested a prize
from the store of the master;
and so, you are denouncing home
family and the society.
Think deeply for once, think!
Think once, and think many a time
when will you adopt
a novel thought?
You are writing, granted
verses, page after page
but when those lines
show no trace of your home
and no hue of your porch;
when you write,
not of the starving ones
but of the over-eating gluttons
not of the peace-makers
but of the trouble-makers,
when, in their praise, you conjure words
and instead of upholding your own land,
your sing high of a foreign land
I just want to ask you:
Dear poet,
in which mood do you write verses?

SHADE OF SAIPAL AND THE FORLORN MIND

Hemant Biwas

Like the grove
beside the Temple of Badimalika
a house sighs — forlorn, forlorn
at the foot of a hill.
It has been years since the last cattle
lazing away in its yard had been seen;
furry tails, as pronounced as a *chammar*
are not seen anymore;
no longer does the symphony of *dhamari* resonate
as the cattle shake their heads;
perhaps the fountains of milk of morn and eve
have relegated to a corner in Barchhyan, far away.
At the cowshed
one can spot a mere remnant of a flax tether now.

The home-yard has turned a hinterland, far-off
its sole surviving owner cannot open the door in the morn;
the sun, that long ago, came to caress in the bed
as it sensed one preparing to rise
makes no entry anymore

With a tender caress along the heart's side
and shaking away the pollens of life
God knows whither the bees have strayed.
Downpour of destiny drips from the roof,
incessantly.
He, grey with the touch of many a spring
looks delighted, like a tenant
that has inherited his heir-less master's farm.
Yet, he seeks for himself within
as though he were searching for *lalgedi*
in the front yard
as the ken of his eyes travels far and wide.
Like a farmer
who moves from his nursery to the canal
at times of cultivation,
he takes heaves of distress
as he takes impatient strides in the front yard.
Every single foot that stood here once
has gone, far away
driven either by dreams to fly over the deeps
or by someone's provocation
to cash the floating time

Like Saipal bedecked by a crown of snow
the walls, smeared with ruddy clay
prostrate at the mantelpiece of his eyes;
once again, after a long time
he rummages every room, in guerrilla fashion

and retrieves a *Company mala*—a garland of silver coins
behind the silo
and drowns in memory of his beloved
whom destiny hewed away — long, long ago.
He pays a forlorn took on the wall
against which stands a rusted copper inscription.
He hurries and picks it up,
and presses against his own breast.
Though his hands and sleeves
are covered with dust,
torrents of his tears
wash the inscription at midnight
bringing its letters to light;
it was the inscription
he had secretely taken away from the store-keeper
many years back,
for, one of its corners bore
his father's glorious name.

Badimalika:	*A famous shrine of Devi in Bajura district*
chammar:	*the end of the furry tail of a yak*
Dhamari:	*a typical Nepali song popular in mid-western and far western Nepal*
Barchhain:	*a village in the southern fringe of Doti district*
Saipal:	*A mountain in Bajhang district*
Company mala:	*coins first brought into use by East India Company, and brought into Nepal by Nepali soldiers employed in British-Indian army. The wives of the soldiers used to make garlands of the silver coins and wear as ornaments.*

THE CITY IS MINE TOO

Tirtha Sangam Rai
(Presently, Qatar)

A crowd of futurity
caught in illusive sights
and groping for Brihaspati of joy,
plays quite near to the home yard of death
on the roadside
looking for their nation
inside thrown-away sacks, daily.
They claim,
"The city is ours, and ours alone
and you have no claim on it."

Today as well
many dangling on a thin string of life
and partaking in nuptial and funeral processions
of dreams
have returned to their homes, early
after a draught in transparent glasses
with snack worth twenty rupees.
To such a city made of illusive pyramids,
I rushed,
holding my life along.

Hoping if I would ever return,
you said, the warm sun of happiness

wanes and falls, withered from the wall
and added, the silvery light of the moon
falls on the veranda of homes, and dies.
But—
I was not bent on quitting;
rather, I had to live with the city
and make it
verdant and fertile
like my village
because, I knew there was a time
when the same city had come hitherto
passing along the trail
that ran through my village;
but the city never returned
to the village
along the same trail.

Getting tip-toe of my entry
stray dogs on the roadside
chased me to the edge of the city
and forfeited the earth I needed to lie on;
they didn't spare even the *chautari*
underneath the shea-butter tree
and as I shivered in the chill
the city-dwellers poured upon me
a bucketful of cold water from atop their mansions.

Tell me, o dear townsmen,
am I an untouchable
hailing from a strange land ?

The water you drink, after all
is from springs in my marshy fields;

the cereals you feed on,
the clothes you wear,
and above all, the air you breath
are from plants growing in my land.
How, then, can you say
the city is yours and yours alone ?

Light, falling from every lamppost
in the city,
the wounded firefly
helplessly lying near a still, dim light,
Singh Durbar
the citadel of men worshipping men,
temples, where people revere their deities
belong to me too,
as much as they belong to you
for, the city belongs to me too.

chautari : a resting place, usually built on a mound or under the tree for travellers to rest

THE DECLARATION OF A MULTICOLOUR LAND

Samadarshi Kainla
(Presently, UAE)

-Helm-
overwhelmed
by an Unidentified Flying Object-

O
L
D
P
A
L
M
Y
R
A
-
Of the desolated Atlantis Island
over idolum highland !
Pictorial life wails -
w a g w a n t t t t t t desiderium of "Paradise Lost"

My dear lasque lass !
Just wait and see-
Old Palmyra of Atlantis Island will suddenly

vanish around glooming;
the cankers will sing metamorphosis-song
and, we shall go home
along with a tsunami !

Along the stampede-way, way-worn, way-farer
in a terrific tantalization; vagary-wave-lines, hastily write-
"Let the contusion cherish to my life !
Let the contusion cherish to my life !
Let the contusion cherish to my life !"

Phantom ! I had not thought death;
it was, yes, a multiple hue
of mirage's dew !
Life tearfully laments : I'm pessimistic !
"This fabulous shadow only the sea keeps!"
Kelm-helm overwhelmed life !

I'm a Gypsy ! S-c-a-r-a-b-
Scrapped from Oedipus complex and Electra complex
to phenomena of ether/ psychic ether !
From cradle to grave - it has also its own hue
of mirage's dew !
Intuitively, a spectrum coming from invincible utopia writes:
Untold reflected life to be told !
Untold reflected life to be told !
Untold reflected life to be told !'

Let the carcass-day vex me
so that I might be able to kill cacoethes of tribulation
and incubus of peep-o-day
to live a real life, changed into a hue
of mirage's dew !
Thereafter, men won't go against mankind
by understanding the havoc of Atomic weapons' compilation !

Labyrinth goes to a black hole
the black hole goes to a labyrinth
black hole- labyrinth
labyrinth- hole black
hole- labyrinth-black
black black black
hole hole hole
labyrinth labyrinth labyrinth.

My dear lasque lass,
you have eaten pomegranates
and I have returned from Arena for affection
to get multicolour osculation.
"The houses are haunted
by white night-gowns.
None is green,
or purple with green rings,
or green with yellow rings,
or yellow with blue rings.
None of them is strange,

with socks of lace
and beaded cinctures."
-Multicolour p-l-a-y-s into amplitude of mind
S-o-a-r-s into an intellectual heaven !

Tooooooooooooooo much depends
upon...
the wasteland
has been changed into a multicolour land today,
Samadarshi Kainla loftily declares-
by synaesthesia !
And, looking twilight-life through the multicolour monticule ...!

SOIL AND ITS TALISMAN

Dipendra Singh Thapa

It's enough for you
to take a handful of soil
and ask;
it shall give you a talisman—

"Do not force the mountains to slide;
the mountains, after all, are made to grow.
Reckon this much for now:
The mountains have peaks atop
and one of them could be Everest too;
a peak should never droop
and Everest should never stoop.

"Spill not murk over the mountains
they are made to scatter light.
Reckon this much for now:
The mountains have eyes, as high they shoot
and faith in them, deep and true;
eyes should never close
and faith never dry.

"Do not set meadows on wild fire;
they extend to cater cool prosperity.
Reckon this much for now:
Underneath the meadows
there lie minds, soft and tender
and there are hearts, full of feelings.
Minds should never blaze
and hearts never burn.

"Do not limit the sky with narrow walls;
the horizons shoot up to transcend all bars.
Reckon this much for now:
A horizon bears in its womb
an opening sky
and an ever-expanding light.
The sky should never be screened
and light never be barred."

I, A SIGNPOST

Biswasdip Tigela
(Presently, Brunei)

I am a signpost
standing still for years now.

Determined feet,
that have reached their destinations
come up to me, and ask,
"Brother ! Which way takes us to the highest peak?
Brother ! Which is the way to the depth of the sea?"
I, a signpost
have been showing them paths, as ever.

Those conquering the peaks
might see me stout;
to those diving into the depth of the seas
I might appear desiccated
but I am a signpost
standing as ever.

Along the same route,
people have walked up to colleges and universities.
With crowns piled one upon another

on their heads
many have reached beyond the green walls.
Blessed are those education centres,
but accursed am I
—a signpost—
doomed to stand still
as ever.

(11 November 2012, on a journey by air
from London to Brunei)

CITY AND THE DREAMS

Keshab Sigdel

This city
doesn't have a face of its own;
innumerable faces
get painted to it every day,
and each new collage
makes a transient new face of this city.

This city
doesn't have a dream of its own;
varied dreams
knitted by those countless faces
assemble to become a new dream for this city.

Inside this city
in the struggle for survival
faces shrink and grow pale
but still live by a strand of hope
as though in a dream
and consider it an achievement
to rejoice alone
and help life get back

towards those
almost forgotten corners of the city streets
where it has been living for years.

At the fall of the day
from the heap of the faces
a face silently
jumps into a damp dark room;
as it enters
all along the walls of the room
it sees a long queue of the dreams–
fertilizing new dreams,
pale and shrunk dreams,
dead dumped dreams,
and a few young dreams
waiting to board onto some promising new faces.

This face
that has never known what it looks like
tries to identify itself
among those many faces;
each face
looks like its own.
In the search,
this face too gets exchanged with a dream
and like innumerable other faces in the city
this particular face
is transformed into the collage of the city dream!

ATLAS

Prakash Subedi

He wouldn't move a bit;
he would be extremely
careful
even while breathing—
though he was completely exhausted,
he would never think of
taking rest—
After all, he was holding the sky!
But one day,
he took off his hands—
but,
to his great dismay—
the sky didn't fall,
and the world moved as usual!

Gods
when I see you
laughing
at the top of your voice
while I shed torrential tears
all alone—
this is the only explanation
I find:
Our gods must be different!

AN AVENGING APPARITION

Jhamak Ghimire

Though you can boast of a hundred thousand offspring
I have only one father.
Baba! Have you forgotten me amid the hordes of your offspring?
I am your disable child.
Have you forgotten your sleepless communion with my mother?
How could you embrace a new ray rising from wrong times?
I am the avenging apparition of a wrong time;
an unwanted offspring—
added to the hordes of your offspring;
a mere child that broke through its mother's stained womb;
a renegade one.
Baba! I entreat you to listen more:
Though you can boast of a hundred thousand children
the union of your blood with mom's runs in my veins.

Questions of silent union arise from a cacophony.
Half-formed by you, fully shaped by my mother
am I the child of the street?
Why did you leave me damaged at a corner of the street?
Why did you fill my mind with gunpowder?
Its transformation will leave your society and you poisoned.
Baba, my last question:
why are you siring a renegade child like me
who lighted your funeral pyre
before you died,
who has mourned your death
before your demise,
shattering pebbles?
Baba! Why are you still siring
a renegade child like me?

(Translation: Bishnu Ghimire)

A JUNGLE OF SMOKE

Narayan Shrestha

In a jungle of fog
a chilling darkness equals existence
and within it
fire and fight are swinging hand-in-hand

In the jungle of fog
as in the lores of antique folks,
storm and cloud are hovering over the street;
once the pillars of folklores
and pick-pocketed identity cards are excavated,
love stories are pasted.

In the story
the heroine attempts to smile as a flower;
the hero narrates a fairytale on marigold;
in the flower garden
a flower and its ominous odour
have frozen into one.

In the jungle,
a nerve-racking thicket of darkness prevails

smeared in the illumination of a gutted village house.
Paddy yields diseases in the field;
on the chimney-piece
excavated skulls are suspended.
Under the total eclipse of misfortune,
the jungle of fog is expanding.

(Translation: Suresh Hachekali)

AT THE MOST

Saraswati Pratikshya

When
you talk of bombs
I talk
of verses.

At the most—
both bombs and verses explode;
only that
when your bomb goes off
you too will not be spared
and when my verses explode
I will be rendered immortal.

LIGHT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Mahesh Paudyal

Weary–
a traveller, walking uphill
to claim his legacy
from his folks up there on the hilltop,
sits under a lone juniper;
heaves deep sighs of frustration
and rages out his fill–
"Didn't the blind folk
see the vast, extensive plains
down there on the river bank?
Why did they have to rot
on the barren, rocky mountaintop
and continue to cherish
the harshest weather on earth?"

Tuned to the sophistications
of radiances in his luxury den
down there in the town—
he can no longer reckon
that the River
on whose bank he honks

the soulless slogans of banal simulacra,
is rooted on the hilltop.
It's as the *Vedas* say:
Aswatha – with roots above and the shoot below!
He cannot reckon—
that civilization of men
did never spring on the plain
and mounted up the hill
like a covetous mountaineer from the West.
The river
and the civilization of men
sprung with a gush, up there, on the mountaintop
near the sky.
Down flowed the river inevitably,
and with it moved some men
to invent money and cars.

If his old grandmother
and the sick grandfather
anchor their lives
to a stone
to a cave
to the smell of the cattle droppings
to cool, refreshing water springs
to the fresh oranges that yield gold
to Nag Raj that guards their water spring
to the ruddy hills and the virgin slopes
where the honey bees hum the song of life

where butterflies and nestlings fly—
he has no point
in puking blasphemy
at the octogenarians
that begot him!

As long as
man thrives on earth
and continues to expand his empire
over the plain,
some dim light
out of an oil lamp
will continue to glow at midnight
on the mountains
far away
silently
yes, silently!

WHILE THE EAST BEGINS TO REDDEN

Meera Mann Thapa

Threading a chain of keen fantasies
putting a wrap of compulsion and helplessness
early in the morning,
the moon blossomed in the eyes.
With a long list of dreams and longings
pricking whole of the bosom
I left home.

Increasing the distance from the reddening east
continuous steps of mine
have halted on the shore of Dead Sea today;
I am looking far, far and beyond
sweeping my body away like a gust of wind.
Among the olive trees stands a row on the footpath;
it plucks flowers and scatters all over the road
just like my tears that incessantly spill out.

If only flowing with the flow of time wasn't called life;
if only the frequenting river of thirst wasn't a compulsion;
if only the ruined youthful nights of mine

weren't spilling onto the pillow with a thirst for embrace.
Like the rain in torrent under the eaves
if only the wave of youthfulness wasn't to disappear in a moment.
Yeah,
time-storm has blown me up
and has thrown me down onto the shore of the Dead Sea

But unexpectedly,
the dark cloud drifting up above my head
has reflected in my eyes a 'circle of silver'
like mustard blossom.
A firm desire has blossomed my heart;
I am standing on my own feet.
Now the sun-like fire won't be able to burn my goal.
All the ups and downs of life
I will tie around my waist as a waistband.

Now my journey from the shore of Dead Sea
to the top of Mt. Everest commences;
rough paths and hurricane-driven wind won't be able to stop.
The steeps fields of blossoming orchid and rhododendron
the tunes of laibari and maruni
have already settled in my eyes.

Wave started resonating in my heart
in this journey of mine
that begun when the sun was about to sink;
the flashes of my own eyes

and the stars in the sky will show me the way.
Together with the chirping of birds
once again as the east begins to redden
to osculate the soil
how shan't I reach!

(Translated by Pancha Vismrit)

laibari: *a Nepali folk tune*
maruni: *a male dancer in guise of a woman*

THOSE AWAY FROM HOME

Tara Parajuli

The morning
no sooner takes off the wrap's edge
than a few rays of daybreak,
at the pregnant horizons
hatch a cold son

Driven away
the disabled refugees
get further into the unknown territory

The days keeping pace with the son
that take leave of the moon
and the mischievous peeping gusts of wind
the season of merrymaking
the tiresome *chautari*
the imaginations at leisure
the sweet perfume of flower
the *selo* on the pasture
the amazing tune in *palam*
the celebration on rice plantation day
coquettish *ratteuli*

maruni, hakpare
Malsiri' in Dashain
Deepavali's marigold, collection of velvet
deusi and *bhaili*
the fresh *chasok tangnam*
The embrace of Eid

All you've packaged up and taken away;
you've just left
a false appearance
all over this globe.
How many times can you deceive
these innocent eyes
showing green heart on the high road
keeping them waiting in a waiting room?

I know not whether that heartless life could
reach us again
through my country.
reaching the summit of Mt. Everest,
I've sent this message:
"Do not remove the mirrors
on whose surface, the future is seen."
Convey it any how
thinking of the ones residing abroad.

(Translated by Pancha Vismrit)

chautari: *a small platform built of stone, bricks or wood for sitting on, erected usually under a tree or at across road*

selo: *a folk song of Bhote, Tamang, Serpa communities of Nepal*

palam: *a folk song of Limbu community*

ratteuli: *a recreational performance by women at the bridegroom's house throughout the night after the bridegroom is sent off to the bride's house for marriage. In the course of the play, they sing, dance and mock the bridegroom's mother*

maruni: *a male dancer in the guise of a woman*

hakpare: *a kind of tune in palam*

Dashain: *grand festival of the Hindus in Nepal celebrated for ten days*

Deepawali: *the Hindu festival of light that falls right after Dashain festival.*

deusi: *a practice in which, duting Deepawali, a group of people visits every house and offer blessings by saying 'deusire' right after the leader of that group recites the leading line*

bhaili: *'bhailo', is like 'deusi' performed just before the day 'deusi' begins*

chasok tangnam: *a Limbu'festival in which people offer their harvest to Waphu Mang' a God in Kirat religion before they consume the first harvest of the season*

Eid: *a festival of the Muslims*

A SHEER LIFE IN THE HIMALAYAS

Pancha Vismrit
(Presently, Saudi Arabia)

Rooted
in an egoistic world
I grow up like the gigantic Mt. Everest.
Look!
I sparkle plenty
I smell of the heroic Gurkhas;
I stand tall
when I think of height

Every morning,
no sooner do I wake up as Fewa Taal and yawn
crazy nature
begins to draw a lively picture
of Machhapuchhre and Annapurna
right on my chest.
When the tender sun rays fall over me,
a gust of languid breeze
from Pokhara
comes and touches the ground of happiness
and provokes a Fewa-wave on the surface of hearts.
People begin to take every single delight

by snapping the present
by leaving pasts behind the rare scene of joy
by moving lives forth, boating here and there
when I feel of love.

As I bow as low as Kathmandu sometimes
to Swayambhu or Pashupatinath
and pray for a light
to my path that has darkened
some miles away
Lumbini turns to me as the light of Asia
and reminds me of do's and don'ts
as if it were a mother
teaching lessons of life to her child
stroking affectionately on his or her back.
All darkness vanishes right away then
to a strange land
when I miss Ma.

But you know, in fact:
I am heading for the summit of prosperity
integrity, tolerance and democracy
the world has ever-stepped up to.
From the third pole of the earth
I've begun a journey to touch an ultimate horizon
moving uphill and downhill
again uphill and downhill

On that note
I would love to teach you
how to carry life in a *doko* and *dhakar*!
On this mighty journey
How to fill tummy with *gundruk* and *dhindo*
roti and *daal*
and belch forth a satisfaction
somewhere in the corner
or amidst a journey;
how to do *huiyyaa pakandi ....*
and wipe away stinky life-sweat.

If you ever think of me
in the shade of Mt. Everest
I've promised not to beg
I've refused to be crushed under someone's heel
I've hated to unleash hatred on own face
I've cursed those that have abandoned mothers heartlessly
as the thighs grow stronger.

Rooting
in the egoistic world,
you should stand tall and still
you are loved by millions and blessed
when you think of life in the Himalayas.

(June 25, 2013 Dammam, KSA)

Fewa Taal:	*one of the prominent lakes in Nepal*
Machhapuchhre:	*a snow-capped mountain near Pokhara*
Annapurna:	*a snow-capped mountain near Pokhara*
Pokhara:	*a beautiful tourist hub in Nepal*
Swayambhu:	*one of the most prominent monuments in Nepal in the western part of the Kathmandu municipality*
Pashupatinath:	*the prominent Hindu temple in the capital city of Nepal*
Lumbini:	*the place where Buddha was born*
doko:	*Nepali wicker-basket*
dhakar:	*a wicker-basket almost flat in shape*
gundruk:	*fermented and dried vegetables made from mustard, radish etc. by burying them under the ground for some days*
dhindo:	*porridge prepared from boiled maize or millet flour*
roti:	*bread*
daal:	*pulse, split peas*
Huiyyaa Pakandi:	*comes from Limbu community in Nepal which refers to an expression made by crying aloud on the way to somewhere especially in hill areas in order to express profound inner feelings or to make someone hear you*

A CAPITAL AWAY FROM YOURS

Rabat

O, Dolma!
Take from your legendary pub
a draught of *chhyang*,
strewn with maggots slithering all through
and come out;
let's dance—you and I
in Gangnam Style.
Your crimson face, after all
calls for no disco light;
pencil-heal is of no worth to you
who grew pristine with bamboo colonnades
at the farm-edge;
your arms
pricked many a time by spines
of wild berries and rhododendron
as you scrambled over them,
need no tattoos of eminence.
Look!
The *gunyu* you have not afforded
to replace yet
has fallen far short of your sixteen-year old knees;

and yet, looks no less gorgeous in you
than a skirt.
The *choli* you received along with your *gunyu*
exposes to the world
your naval expanse
wide enough for a goat's kid to scuttle
and the same looks
no less stylist than the 'Designer's Top'.
O, Dolma!
Why do you blush so much,
so coyly?
Come;
let's laze underneath this sky
laden with millions of lights
and drink from cups
draughts and draughts of *chhyang*
with swarm of maggots
and tell one another, "I love you!"
After all, you and the slope
you have scaled on swings
are no less prodigious than a tall mansion
of many a storey.
Look;
how low does the Dharhara look
from this spot
and how diminished the Ghantaghar stands
with its Lilliputian gait!
How low the palaces of names I barely know

appear on the ground?
O, Dolma!
Come; climb atop this bay-berry
and look out;
the capital looks smaller than your *dhungri*
from there we, on hills all around it,
have always appeared no less than mere watchmen
keepings its security;
no less than porters,
and no less than slaves.
O, Dolma!
My beloved!
From your legendary pub
drink *chhyang* littered with slithering maggots
and come;
let's scream out to the world:
"We are the master and mistress of this place;
we also have a capital, as you do."

chhyang: locally-brewed millet beer

gunyu: a Nepali loin for women

choli: a cultural blouse, worn by Nepali women

THE MOURNING MORNING CROWD

Deependra Adhikary

A crowd is mourning in the morning
seeing the deathless death.
Everyone seems proud
as though they have owned the death
as though they have won a race.

+

He has stopped the marathon.
Sweat, blood and salt
forgive him forever and ever
in this exult.

+ +

Hovering clouds gather at death;
rain of tears pours on, as if it is remorseless.
Oh my God!
Give him a space beyond space.
It is a postulate...
and the twinkling poltergeist hidden in the centre.

Do not politicize a deathless death!
Be aware, all leaders and people,
for further race.

\+ + +

See the canopy of the Himalayas
with a white face
glittering in a progressive race.
Oh my country! Go ahead in the race.
Let me see everyone in cheerful faces.
Hope, hope and hope......
for further race.

ALONE ALONE, ONCE AGAIN

Heman Yatree

A portraits, black-and-white, of youthful days
shall incessantly be grinning
from a frame hung on the wall
pigeons shall still be crooning on the attic,
treepies, in bevies, shall hoot their ditty
from the bamboo grove nearby;
only that—
someone so dear
shall no longer be there!

The sun shall prize the western verge;
cattle shall plod their homeward path;
weary farmhands shall return home
with sickles and spades from girdles hung;
grandsons and daughters from school shall come
homeward, as time sings its swan-songs
only that—
someone departed
shall never come home.

The sky, with laws of silence
speaks, when dripping falls the rain
the dormant ditty of a brook resounds
in slopes and caverns, so profound;
the wind can rather be tracked by ears
when leaves its words catch and utter;
a night so dark can speak aloud
if utter solitude is ever allowed
but alas—
someone so close
shall speak no more!

As nature sings its anthem of time,
pigeons in attics shall croon on hymns
treepies shall chirp on, in bamboo groves.
Right that moment, at home shall go
nuptial joys of grandchildren, young;
you shall, alas, with a stick reach
the *yagya* on the front yard built,
to give them blessing of life and bliss
shockingly there—
you shall recall
a near one, lost forever.
You shall slowly return home
and ascend the stairs, forlorn, forlorn
open a tin-safe, black with soot,
take out letters of love so cute,

tucked in a diary for years and years
and shall behold the pictures dual
that showcase the mirth of wedding-year!

Memory of a soul so dear
as cuts so deeply through the heart,
you shall feel on the left of breast
as you stroke it, alas, in vain!
The sun shall still be heading west
when, for home hers own, the granddaughter leaves,
right that moment, you shall throw
old, unclear eyes of age
through the window, for a prolonged gaze
alas, alas—
the forlorn river shall come to sight
and with it, you shall flow in tide,
once again
all alone.

yagya : an arrangement for religious ritual

THE TAKEOVER

Puspa Moonankarmi

They enjoy
every day as the New Year Day;
they kiss
every step with happiness;
the posy appear
in each of their moments.

But for me
every day is a whetted cactus
every moment is the setting sun
the chilling thunder wakes me up;
a bottomless cipher welcomes me every day.

The days and weekends I saw,
the months and years I tolerated,
the decades and the golden moments I passed,
I abide nothing by, except the river of blood
and the oceans of tears.

I drank the oceans; I hovered over the glacier
I breathed the Sahara Desert
and when I lay on the desert cactus

with a little hope
that perhaps
I could receive some mercy.

Alas!
God is deaf;
it did not listen to me at all !
It is blind…!…!…!

I happened to flip the lexicon
to find the word 'New Year'!
I frequently
wide opened my judgment
to see if I could find the word 'Peace'.
The lexicon
did not quench my neophyte curiosity.
Days and weekends, months and years
decades and golden moments
the new sun of the day
the new day of the weekend
the weekend of the month
the new month of the year
the new year of the decade
each golden moment of the 'New Year Day'
the coups, the conspiracies and
the takeovers after each decade....
Will they bring
total happiness today and after ?
Are they meant to restore peace and security ?

THE HUMAN KINGDOM

Phulman Bal

Monsieur,
do you have a little water?

Fire?
It was water I was asking for,
Monsieur!

Don't you know—
that when there's a drought of compassion
fire spills all over the kingdom of life,
rises in flames,
and hunts for every bit of harmony?

O, is that so?
That means, only fire is cultivated here?
Don't flowers ever bloom in this part of the world?
Don't the cuckoos rove about?
Are there no fountains that spew water,
just enough to quench one's parched throat?

O, vultures?
Mountains of cactuses?
That means, no pigeon ever croons here?
Is vulture the national bird
and cactus the national flower here?
That means, no rose ever opens up?

If so, I beg your pardon, Monsieur!
I happened to lose my way
and run, by mistake,
into the human kingdom.

THE SEA PORT

Basanta Basnet

A few coaches, loaded with goods
are attached to the liner;
with them are brains
loaded with ideas.
Ships come and go
sail away and return
as alone I stand at the port
watching the game.

Behold! There's a ship there,
that sails away every morning
from the East
and returns from the Western waterway
as the days wane down to dusk.
Another ones comes there,
to sail away with *majoto* and *budho okhati*
—madder and astilbe herbs—
only to return as pills and capsules.

These ships are strange analogues of our thinking
exported so cheap

as raw materials
and imported at high cost
as finished goods
at the ports.

O my landlocked mind
coming to have a glimpse of the sea
from a landlocked country!
Do not make yourself a port, wherefrom
like fowls hung down from the head
as they are rushed to a fresh house,
intellect of the Third World is exported
at a ridiculous price
only to return to the port
as the postmodern ego of the First World
cloaked under a cap, a gown or a tie
to be sold at a maddening price.

YOU ARE BARTERING DEATH

Asafal Gautam

He was lying supine
on a messy bed,
planning every plot.
When, at an edge of his pillow
he found a match-stick
he remembered his beloved,
groped sideways with hands
and when found her quite near
gripped her tight into his arms
and kindled a flame of love.

He played, without a care
until he was satiated in full;
empowered by his wilful choice
he used her as he wanted;
I stood, mutely witnessing
every move of his love-making
until he ejaculated and turned pale,
fully exhausted.
And then, he turned the other way
flinging her off his side.

I was besieged by musings
and a deep pain gnawed—
perhaps he thought
that he calmed his cravings;
but I reckoned,
his life was playing with death.

He too knows it, after all
and needs no telling.
Comments can hurt him
and his dreams can shatter.
He is playing with his beloved, granted
but Kanchha, you need to think deep
when the fact is more than apparent;
you are bartering life
with a stick of cigar.

ANCESTORS

Anil Prithak

With a veil of clouds coloured in black,
the sky covers its face!
Thunderbolt, the divine runner
is on the move, always
making its strokes with a brush of fire
all over the canvas of the horizons.
This is the exact moment,
when our ancestors descend from heavens
shod in water
along steps covered in leaves.
At the sal colonnade
the *dowa* of the great grandfathers
tries to invoke *Sehé*
seating himself on the mat of leaves
rustling down the sal boughs.
Look up into the sky that night;
you will see it shimmer
for, it's the land of our ancestors
the country of Paruhang.
Naive were our ancestors;
they knew not

the carmagnole of rebellion,
or the songs of dissent;
nor did they ever comprehend
the art of killing.
All they knew was how to flow
like rivers.
Therefore, as soon as they land on earth
they are impatient
to get engulfed into rivers' arms,
and to rise higher and higher still
mounted on clouds
and horses with wings of storm.
Once they come,
they do not return without a mark;
they leave back spring
on the white palms of *tanki*;
they caress the breasts of the dales
and leave them sprouted with glade of gold.
Like their sons and daughters,
they enter gardens
and breathe life into flowers.
They do nothing else,
but come down to the earth at times
to teach their progenies
the sacred worship of nature.

dowa: *a shaman (in Bantawa dialect), who communicates with souls*
Sehe: *soul of the dead in Kirat dialect*
tanki: *a species of orchid with white flowers.*

MY COUNTRY, MY PRIDE

Mitra Lal Parday
(Presently, Poland)

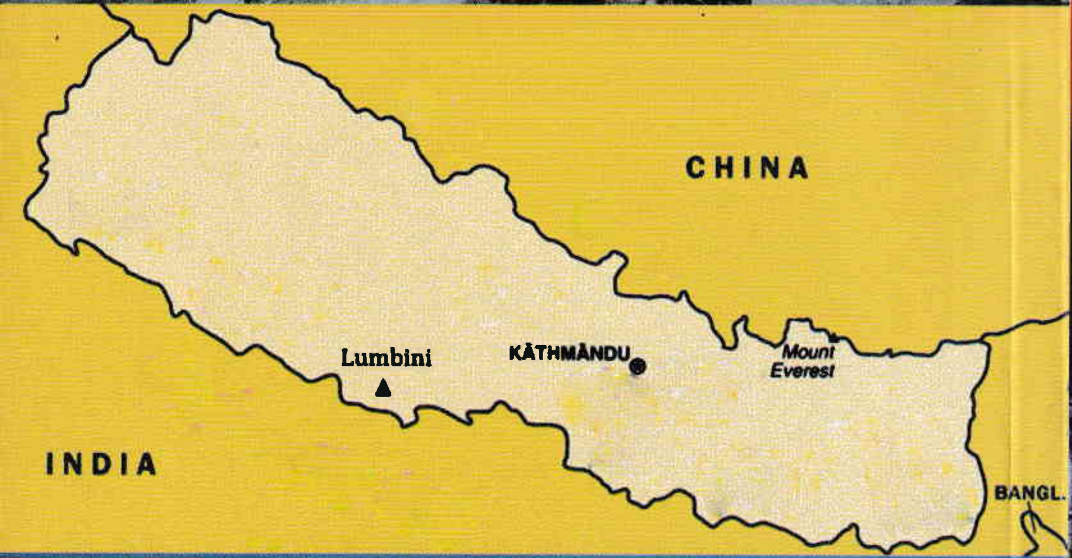
I know, my nation laments each day
I hear her pains and humble lay,
Many times my heart, pines for her
I own her cultures, at home, or far.

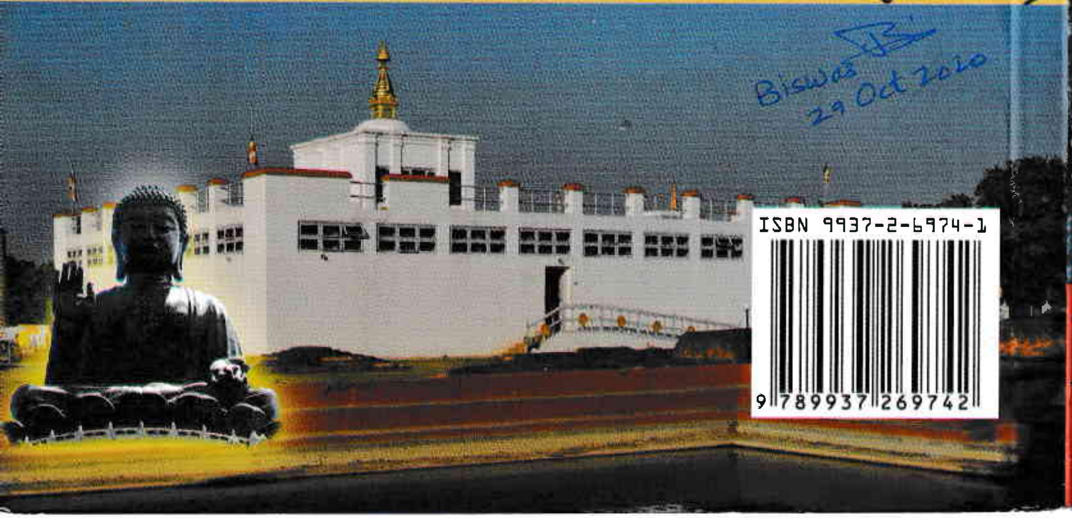
Though far I live, I cannot forget,
What if in heaven, her glimpse I get,
I love you always, my blessed land!
I will be back home, my motherland!

I hear you cry though none cares,
I hear you beg though none does hear ,
I read of thy pains, sorrows each day
and lament as rascals belie and betray.

My mother, you will smile one day,
Nepal, we'll wipe thy tears one day,
we'll carve heaven on laps so kind
wait for a while, for bliss divine.

nrn.org.np
Non-Resident Nepali Association
गैर आवासीय नेपाली संघ
Download NRNA Newsletter
Subscribe your Copy
Latest News:
6TH NRN GLOBAL CONFERENCE &
NRNA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION 2013
Press Release
Click here for details..
News Updates :
PRESS RELEASES
www.gfnl.org
विश्व नेपाली साहित्य महासङ्घ
Global Federation for Nepali Literature (GFNL)
Global Persekutuan untuk Sastera Nepal
www.gfnl.org
Home
Member
Introduction
By-Laws
Committee
Branch
Gallery
Literature
News
Photo
Press
Notice
सूचना तथा जानकारी
GFNL Mission Statement
"The mission of GFNL is to preserve and promote Nepali Literature and Nepali identity around the world."
विश्व नेपाली साहित्य सम्मेलन
Conference of Global Nepali Literature
Kathmandu, Nepal
विश्व नेपाली साहित्य महासङ्घ
www.nepalisamachar.com
नेपालीसमाचार.डटकम
nepaliSamachar
HOME
HEADLINES
ENGLISH
DIASPORA
OPINION
SPORT
LITERATURE
GALLERY
MIX
ENTERTAINMENT
HEADLINES
RECENT POSTS
पूर्व मन्त्री खपांगीको उपचारको लागि
सेवा नै धर्म हो -
nepaliliterature.com
अनलाइन नेपाली साहित्य मञ्च
Online Nepali Literature Forum
Live Chat
You may write me down in...





Biswas 29 Oct 2020

ISBN 9937-2-6974-1
9 789937 269742